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ABSTRACT

Both core curriculum and multiculturalism are highly contested issues in education today. For this discussion, a relatively broad definition of core curriculum is used, ranging from core programs that require students to take one mandated course or a series of them to generalized distribution requirements more commonly put into practice as a core curriculum. Advocates of new scholarship have had at least two goals. One has been to establish new courses devoted to the primary concerns of feminist and multicultural scholarship, and the other has been concerned with transforming existing mainstream courses. Three paradigms have generally been adopted to bring about a multicultural core educational experience: (1) change in textbooks and disciplinary-based change; (2) a "diversity" requirement in the core curriculum; and (3) reconstructing Western civilization through a mandated sequence of courses. The tensions and possibilities of developing multicultural core curricula require a real commitment to change and honest debate about the political issues underlying innovations such as multiculturalism. (Contains 80 references.) (SLD)

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